



# **Providing a View From the Front Line: How Deployment Effects Reservists**

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<b>Report Documentation Page</b>			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
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1. REPORT DATE <b>10 DEC 2009</b>	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2009 to 00-00-2009</b>		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Providing a View From the Front Line: How Deployment Effects Reservists</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
			5b. GRANT NUMBER	
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
			5e. TASK NUMBER	
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>Office of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs),Force Health Protection &amp; Readiness,Falls Church,VA,22041</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES <b>Presented at The Second Annual Trauma Spectrum Disorders Conference: A Scientific Conference on the Impact of Military Service on Families and Caregivers, 10 December 2009, Bethesda, MD</b>				
14. ABSTRACT				
15. SUBJECT TERMS				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:  a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT  <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES  <b>13</b>
b. ABSTRACT  <b>unclassified</b>			19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON	
c. THIS PAGE  <b>unclassified</b>				



# Who are the Reserves?

- **1.1 million men and women** from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard Reserve, the Army National Guard and Army Air Guard
- **Gender:** 888,892 Males; 192,453 Females
- **Race:**
  - White: 817,843
  - Black: 152,802
  - AI/NA: 0,979
  - A: 29,382
  - NH/PI: 5457
  - UNK: 12,918
  - O: 51,984
- **Ethnicity:**
  - A 33,176
  - H 102,659
  - NA 11,160
  - O 499,876
  - NONE 410,153
  - UNK 24,341
- **Average age:** 38 years old

Data Source: Defense Manpower Data Center



# How Long Have They Been Deployed?

- Percentage Deployed<sup>1</sup>
  - Army National Guard: 46%
  - Army Reserve: 55%
  - Navy Reserve: 25%
  - Marine Corps Reserve: 39%
  - Air National Guard: 13%
  - Air Force Reserve: 22%
  - Coast Guard Reserve: 0.2%
- Average length of deployment since 2001<sup>\*2</sup>
  - Army NG and Reserve: 414 days or 14 months
  - Navy Reserve, 324 days or 11 months
  - Marine Corps Reserve: 356 days or 12 months
  - The Air National Guard & Reserve: 248 days or 8 months

\*Note: since January 2007 Deployments have been limited to 12 months

1. Reserve Components Common Personnel Data System
2. Defense Manpower Data Center



# Who Are The Families?

- Reservists
  - Married: ~50%<sup>1</sup>
  - Dependents: 1,618,041<sup>2</sup>
- Location
  - **Most live in communities far from military installations**
  - **Communities have little understanding of, and experience, with the military**

1. Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System /Reserve Components Common Personnel Data System  
2. Defense Manpower Data Center



# Effects of Chronic Deployment

- Multiple deployments and returns can amplify family problems and stress strained relationships and financial resources.
- Even a single deployment can create problems with civilian employers. Deployment often leads to an increase in substance dependence and abuse.<sup>1</sup>
- No direct link between deployment and suicide has been found.<sup>2</sup>

1. Jacobson, I.G., et al (2008). Alcohol use and alcohol-related problems before and after military combat deployment. *JAMA*, 300(6), 663-675.
2. Kang, & Bullman (2008). Risk of suicide among US veterans after returning from the Iraq or Afghanistan war zones. *JAMA*, 300 (6), 652-653.



# Substance Abuse in the Reserve Component (RC)

- **Tobacco:**
  - General smoking rates: 8-9 % across all Reserve Components
  - Higher rates of heavy smoking in ARNG, USMCR and USAR<sup>1</sup>
- **Alcohol:**
  - Lower daily alcohol consumption rates in USAFR, ANG and USNR than ARNG, USAR and USMCR<sup>1</sup>
- **Illegal Substances:**
  - Highest Rates in ARNG
  - Lowest in USNR
  - All illegal drug users are outprocessed from the RC<sup>1</sup>



# Stress and the RC

- **Source:**
  - Family
  - Civilian employment
  - Reserve employment
- **Result:**
  - 36% reported military work demands interfere with family life;
  - Highest level of family-work conflict: USMCR
  - Lowest level of family-work conflict: ANG<sup>1</sup>
  - History of SH/SA leads to poorer physical and mental
  - Health: depression, PTSD & somatic symptoms<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>DoD Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Guard and Reserve Force, 2007 by RTI International

<sup>2</sup> Street, et al., (2008). Sexual harassment and assault experienced by reservists during military service: Prevalence and health correlates, *Jnl Rehab Rsch & Dev*, 45 (3), 409-420.



# Women and Stress in the RC

- DoD Survey Indications
  - Women reported significantly **more stress than men**<sup>1</sup>
  - 25% reported a '**great deal**' of **stress** related to being a female in a male-dominated, combat-oriented environment<sup>1</sup>
  - More than 50% of females and 37% of males reported some type of physical or sexual harassment or abuse<sup>1, 2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>DoD Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Guard and Reserve Force, 2007 by RTI International

<sup>2</sup> Street, et a., (2008). Sexual harassment and assault experienced by reservists during Military service: Prevalence and health correlates, *Jnl Rehab Rsch & Dev*, 45 (3), 409-420.



# Women and Stress in the RC

- Most studies on women are descriptive & observational, clustered in areas related to PTSD:
  - Stress of military life
  - Health & performance
  - Health services research
  - Psychiatric conditions<sup>4</sup>
- There is much less research on evaluation of treatment or prevention programs<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Goldzweig, et al. (2006). The state of women veterans' health research: Results of a systematic Literature review. *J Gen Intern Med* 21, S82-92.



# Children of Deployed RC Members

- Little research on children of deployed RC
- 400,000 DOD adolescent family members
- Number of school-age children of RC-deployed personnel unknown
- Evidence indicates the Gulf War (1990-1991) families were still experiencing difficulties one year after reunion<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>DOD, 2007). *2005 Demographics Report*. Arlington, Va: Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy

<sup>2</sup> Peebles-Kleiger & Kleiger (1994). Re-integration stress for Desert Storm families: Wartime deployments and family trauma. *Jnl of Traumatic Stress*, 7, 173-194.



# What We Don't Know

- Effective ways to reduce tobacco and alcohol use in RC
- Effective ways to teach gender-appropriate stress-reduction behaviors in RC
- If there are varying responses to deployment by gender and component
- Effective ways to help families and children cope with deployment
- Ways to provide effective services to a geographically-dispersed force



# Conclusion

## Reserve Component vs. Active Duty

- The Reserves are now an operational force comprised of 82% men and 18% women.<sup>1</sup>
- The Reserves are an ethnically diverse force.
- RC Members are unique in that they juggle a civilian career in addition to military career and family-which *may* mean greater stress prior to and after deployment.
- RC Members may have unique needs yet to be identified within the paradigm of being an operational force.



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